

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 and 19-28 are pending in the subject application prior to entry of this Amendment. By the Amendment herewith, new claims 29-32 are added, as supported by the original claims and specification. In particular, these claims relate to a mechanical connection between the camera units. Support for the mechanical connection can be found, e.g., at page 14, lines 13-16 of the specification. One embodiment including mechanical connection also is disclosed in the first paragraph of page 15 of the specification. No new matter is introduced into the application.

Accordingly, upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-9 and 19-32 are pending. Of those claims, claims 1, 19 and 28 remain independent.

In the outstanding non-final Office Action, claims 1-9 and 19-27 are objected to because of the informality noted at page 3 of the Action. In particular, the Patent Office objects to the claims as lacking the articles (a, an or the) at the beginning of each claim. Applicant has amended the claims, as suggested by the Examiner, and thus this objection should be reconsidered and withdrawn. It is respectfully noted that these clarifying amendments are not made for reasons related to patentability and the full range of equivalents should remain intact.

Claims 1-9, 19-26 and 28 are rejected under 35 USC Section 102(b) as being anticipated by Ishikawa (US Patent 6,549,650). Lastly, dependent claim 27 is rejected under 35 USC Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishikawa in view of Orimoto (US Patent 7,102,685).

The foregoing rejection is respectfully disagreed with, and is traversed below.

According to embodiments of Applicant's claimed invention, turning of the camera units is caused by altering the distance between the camera units.

The Patent Office rejects Applicant's independent claims on the basis of Ishikawa. Applicant respectfully asserts that Ishikawa does not anticipate the subject matter recited in Applicant's independent claims 1, 19 and 28.

Ishikawa discloses changing the convergence angle of the image sensing optical systems and parallelly displacing the optical systems, but these actions are done independently of each other. In one option, the convergence angle is increased to its limit value and after that the image sensing optical systems are parallelly displaced to decrease the distance therebetween as the convergence angle cannot be increased anymore. Another option is that the convergence angle is decreased to zero and after that the image sensing optical systems are parallelly displaced to increase the distance therebetween. It is also possible to parallelly displace the optical systems before their convergence angle is increased to the limit value or decreased to zero (see col. 48, lines 12 – col. 49, line 36 of Ishikawa). All of these examples represent changing the angle first and altering the distance thereafter or vice versa. Altering the distance to cause a changing of the angle is not disclosed or even suggested.

For at least the above reasons, it is respectfully asserted that Applicant's independent claims are not anticipated by Ishikawa. Nor is there any reason to modify the teachings of Ishikawa in an attempt to arrive at the subject matter recited in these independent claims.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 19 and 28 are new and non-obvious in view of Ishikawa. Accordingly, all remaining dependent claims, including newly added claims 29-32 also are patentable at least in view of their dependency from an allowable independent claim.

For completion, it is respectfully noted that the addition of Orimoto, which was cited in the rejection of Applicant's dependent claim 27, does not cure the shortcoming of Ishikawa and thus does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed subject matter.

All issues having been addressed, the subject application is believed to be in condition for immediate allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding objections and rejections. A Notice of Allowance is therefore earnestly solicited.

A call to the undersigned would be appreciated should the Examiner have any questions.

Respectfully submitted:

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